

The Real Man

By FRANCIS LYNDE

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JOHN SMITH, THE NEW FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF TIMANYONI DITCH COMPANY, MAKES A PLAN TO PUT THE CONCERN ON ITS FEET, BUT ENEMIES ARE HARD AT WORK TO THWART HIM.

Synopsis.—J. Montague Smith, cashier of Lawrenceville Bank and Trust company, society bachelor engaged to marry Verda Richlander, heiress, knocks his employer, Watrous Dunham, senseless, leaves him for dead and flees the state when Dunham accuses Smith of dishonesty and wants him to take the blame for embezzlement actually committed by Dunham. Several weeks later, Smith appears as a tramp at a town in the Rocky mountains and gets a laboring job in an irrigation ditch construction camp. His intelligence draws the attention of Williams, the superintendent, who thinks he can use the tramp, John Smith, in a more important place. The ditch company is in hard lines financially because eastern financial interests are working to undermine the local crowd headed by Colonel Baldwin and take over valuable property. Smith finally accepts appointment as financial secretary of Baldwin's company. He has already struck up a pleasant acquaintance with Corona Baldwin, the colonel's winsome daughter.

CHAPTER VIII.—Continued.

"You followed?" queried Stanton.
"Yes, and when I got there the colonel was shut up in Williams' office with a fellow named Smith. When I got a place to listen in they were getting ready to quit, and the colonel was saying: 'That settles it, Smith; you've got to come over into—I didn't catch the name of the place—and help us.'"
Again the gentleman with the sharp jaw took time for narrow-eyed reflection.
"You'll have to switch over from the colonel to this fellow Smith for the present, Shaw," he decided, at length. "You look him up and do it quick."
The young man glanced up with a faint warning of aversion in his sleepy eyes. "It'll most likely run into money—for expenses," he suggested.
"For graft, you mean," snapped Stanton. Then he had it out with this second subordinate in crisp English. "I'm onto you with both feet, Shaw; every crook and turn of you. More than that, I know why you were fired out of Maxwell's office; you've got sticky fingers. That's all right with me up to a certain point, but beyond that point you get off. Understand?"
Shaw made no answer in direct terms, but if his employer had been watching the heavy-lidded eyes, he might have seen in them the shadow of a thing much more dangerous than plain dishonesty: a passing shadow of the fear that makes for treachery when the sharp need for self-protection arises.
"I'll try to find out about the hobo," he said, with fair enough lip-loyalty, and after he had rolled a fresh cigarette he went away to begin the malingering operations which might promise to unearth Smith's record.
It was ten o'clock when Shaw left the real-estate office in the Hophra House block. Half an hour earlier Smith had come to town with the colonel in the roadster, and the two had shut themselves up in the colonel's private room in the Timanyoni Ditch company's town office in the Barker building, which was two squares down the street from the Hophra house. Summoned promptly, Martin, the bookkeeper, had brought in his statements and balance sheets,

plained. "In modern business it is the process of extinguishing a corporation; closing it up and burying it in another and bigger one, usually. That is what we must do with Timanyoni Ditch."

"I'm getting you, a little at a time," said the colonel, taking his first lesson in high finance as a duck takes to the water. Then he added: "It won't take much of a lick to kill off the old company, in the shape it's got into now. How will you work it?"

Smith had the plan at his fingers' ends. With the daring of all the perils had come a fresh access of fighting fitness that made him feel as if he could cope with anything.
"We must close up the company's affairs and then reorganize promptly and, with just a little noise as may be, form another company—which we will call Timanyoni High Line—and let it take over the old outfit, stock, liabilities and assets entire. You say your present capital stock is one hundred thousand dollars. This new company that I am speaking of will be capitalized at, say, an even half million. To the present holders of Timanyoni Ditch we'll give the new stock for the old, share for share, with a bonus of twenty-five shares of the new stock for every twenty-five shares of the old surrendered and exchanged. This will be practically giving the present shareholders two for one. Will that satisfy them?"

This time Colonel Dexter Baldwin's smile was grim.
"You're just juggling now, John, and you know it. Out here on the woolly edge of things a dollar is just a plain iron dollar, and you can't make it two merely by calling it so."
"Never you mind about that," cut in the new financier. "At two to one for the amortization of the old company we shall still have something like three hundred thousand dollars treasury stock upon which to realize for the new capital needed, and that will be amply sufficient to complete the dam and the ditches and to provide a fighting fund. Now then, tell me this: how near can we come to placing that treasury stock right here in Timanyoni Park? It's up to us to keep this thing in the family, so to speak; and the moment we go into other markets we are getting over into the enemy's country. I'm not saying that the money couldn't be raised in New York; but if we should go there, the trust would have an underhold on us, right from the start."

"I see," said the colonel, who was indeed seeing many things that his simple-hearted philosophy had never dreamed of; and then he answered the direct question. "There is plenty of money right here in the Timanyonis."

Smith nodded. He was getting his second wind now, and the race promised to be a keen joy.
"But they would have to be 'shown,' you think?" he suggested. "All right; we'll proceed to show them. Now we can come down to present necessities. We've got to keep the work going—and speed it up to the limit: we ought to double Williams' force at once—put on a night shift to work by electric light."

The colonel blinked twice and swallowed hard.
"Say, John," he said, leaning across the table-desk; "you've sure got your nerve with you. Do you know our present bank balance is under five thousand dollars, and a good part of that is owing to the cement people!"

"Never mind; don't get nervous," was the reassuring rejoinder. "We are going to make it bigger in a few minutes, I hope. Who is your banker here?"
"Dave Kinzie of the Brewster City National."

"Tell me a little something about Mr. Kinzie before we go down to see him; just brief him for me as a man, I mean."

The colonel was shaking his head slowly.
"He's what you might call a twenty-ton optimist, Dave is; solid, a little slow and sure, but the biggest boomer in the West, if you can get him start-

ed—believes in the resources of the country and all that. But you can't borrow money from him without security, if that's what you're aiming to do."
"Can't we?" smiled the young man who knew banks and bankers. "Let's go and see. You may introduce me to Kinzie as your acting financial secretary, if you like. Now one more question: What is Kinzie's attitude toward Timanyoni Ditch?"

"At first he was all kinds of friendly; he is a stockholder in a small way. But after a while he began to cool down a little, and now—well, I don't know; I hate to think it of Dave, but I'm afraid he's leaning the other way, toward these Eastern fellows. He tried to cover Stanton's tracks in the stock-buying from Gardner and Bolling."

"That is natural, too," said Smith, whose point of view was always unobscured in any battle of business. "The big company would be a better customer for the bank than your little one could ever hope to be. I guess that's all for the present. If you're ready, we'll go down and face the music."

"By Janders!" said the colonel with an open smile; "I believe you'd just as soon tackle a banker as to eat your dinner; and I'd about as soon take a horsewhipping. Come on; I'll steer you up against Dave, but I'm telling you right now that the steering is about all you can count on from me."

It was while they were crossing the street together that Mr. Crawford Stanton had his third morning caller, a thickset, barrel-bodied man with little piglike eyes, closely cropped hair, a bristling mustache, and a wooden leg of the homemade sort. The men of the camps called the cripple "Peg-leg" or "Blue Pete" indifferently, though not to his face. For though the fat face was always relaxed in a good-natured smile, the crippled saloonkeeper was of those who kill with the knife.

Stanton looked up from his desk when the pad-and-click of the cripple's step came in from the street.

"Hello, Simms," he said, in curt greeting. "Want to see me? Sit down."

Simms threw the brim of his soft hat up with a backhanded stroke and shook his head. "It ain't worth while; and I gotta get back to camp. I blew in to tell y'a there's a fella out there that needs th' sandbag."

"Who is it?"

"Fella name' Smith. He's showin' 'em how to cut too many corners—pace-settin', he calls it. First thing they know, they'll get the concrete up to where the high water won't bust it out."

Stanton's laugh was impatient.

"Don't make any mistake of that sort, Simms," he said. "We don't want the dam destroyed; we'd work just as hard as they would to prevent that. All we want is to have other people think it's likely to go out—think it hard enough to keep them from putting up any more money. Let that go. Is there any more fresh talk—among the men?"

Stanton picked himself a little upon the underground wire-pulling which had resulted in putting Simms on the ground as the keeper of the construction-camp canteen. It was a fairly original way of keeping a listening ear open for the camp gossip.

"Little," said the cripple briefly. "This here blank-blank fella Smith's been tellin' Williams that I ort to be run off th' reservation; says th' booze puts the brake on for speed."

"So it does," agreed Stanton musingly. "But I guess you can stay a while longer. I have a notion that Smith's been sent here—by some outfit that means to buck us. If he hasn't any backing—"

The interruption was the hurried coming of the young man with sleepy eyes and the cigarette stains on his fingers, and for once in a way he was stirred out of his customary attitude of cynical indifference.

"Smith and Colonel Baldwin are over yonder in Kinzie's private office," he reported hastily. "Before they shut the door I heard Baldwin introducing Smith as the new acting financial secretary of the Timanyoni Ditch company!"

CHAPTER IX.

When Greek Meets Greek.

Smith allowed himself ten brief seconds for a swift eye-measuring of the square-shouldered, stockily built man with a gray face and stubby mustache sitting in the chair of authority at the Brewster City National before he chose his line of attack.

"We are not going to cut very deeply into your time this morning, Mr. Kinzie," he began when the eye-appraisal had given him his cue. "You know the history of Timanyoni Ditch up to the present, and—well, to cut out the details, there is to be a complete reorganization of the company on a new basis, and we are here to offer to take your personal allotment of the stock off your hands at par for cash. Colonel Baldwin has stipulated that his friends in the original deal must be protected, and—"

"Here, here—hold on," interrupted the bank president; "you're hitting it up a little bit too fast for me, Mr. Smith. Who are you, and whereabouts do you hold forth when you are at home?"

Smith laughed easily. "If we were trying to borrow money of you, we might have to go into preliminaries and particulars, Mr. Kinzie. We are not alone in the fight for the water rights on the other side of the river, as you know, and until we are safely fortified we shall have to be prudently cautious. What we want to know now is this: Will you let us protect you by taking your Timanyoni Ditch stock at par?"

Kinzie met the issue fairly. "I don't know you yet, Mr. Smith; but I do know Colonel Baldwin, here, and I guess I'll take a chance on things as they stand. I'll keep my stock."

The new secretary's smile was rather patronizing than grateful.

"As you please, Mr. Kinzie, of course," he said smoothly. "But I'm going to tell you frankly that you'll keep it at your own risk. I am not sure what plan will be adopted, but I assume it will be amortization and a retirement of the stock of the original company. The voting control of the old stock we already have, as you know."

The banker pursed his lips until the stubby gray mustache stood out stiffly. Then he cut straight to the heart of the matter.

"You mean that there will be a majority pool of the old stock, and that the pool will ignore those stockholders who don't come in?"

"Something like that," said Smith pleasantly. And then: "We're going to be generously liberal, Mr. Kinzie; we are giving Colonel Baldwin's friends a fair chance to come in out of the wet. Of course, if they refuse to come in—if they prefer to stay out—"

Kinzie was smiling sourly.

"You'll have to take care of your own banker, won't you, Mr. Smith?" he asked. "Why don't you loosen up and tell a little more? What have you fellows got up your sleeve, anyway?"

At this, the new financial manager slacked off on the hawser of secrecy a little—just a little.

"Mr. Kinzie, we've got the biggest thing, and the surest, that ever came to Timanyoni Park; not in futures, mind you, but in facts already as good as accomplished. If it were necessary—as it isn't—I could go to New York to-



"We Are Not Going to Cut Very Deeply."

day and put a million dollars behind our reorganization plan in twenty-four hours. You'd say so yourself if I were at liberty to explain. But again you're dodging and wasting your time and ours. Think the matter over—about your stock—and let me know before noon. It's rather cruel to hurry you so, but time is precious with us and—"

"You sit right down there, young man, and put a little of this precious time of yours against mine," said Kinzie, pointing authoritatively at the chair which Smith had just vacated. "You mustn't go off at half-cock, that way. You'll need a bank here to do business with, won't you?"

Smith did not sit down. Instead, he smiled genially and fired his final shot.

"No, Mr. Kinzie; we shan't need a local bank—not as a matter of absolute necessity. In fact, on some accounts I don't know but that it would be better for us not to have one."

"Sit down," insisted the bank president; and this time he would take no denial. Then he turned abruptly upon Baldwin, who had been playing his part of the silent listener letter-perfect.

"Baldwin, we are old friends, and I'd trust you to the limit—on any proposition that doesn't ask for more than the straight-from-the-shoulder honesty. How much is this young friend of ours talking through his hat?"

"Not any, whatever, Dave. He's got the goods," Baldwin was wise enough to limit himself carefully as to quantity in his reply.

Again the banker made a comical bristle brush of his cropped mustache.

"I want your business, Dexter; I've got to have it. But I'm going to be plain with you. You two are asking me to believe that you've gone outside and dug up a new bunch of backers. That may be all right, but Timanyoni Ditch has struck a pretty big bone that maybe your new backers know about—and maybe they don't. You've had a lot of bad luck, so far; getting your land titles cleared, and all that; and you're going to have more. I've—"

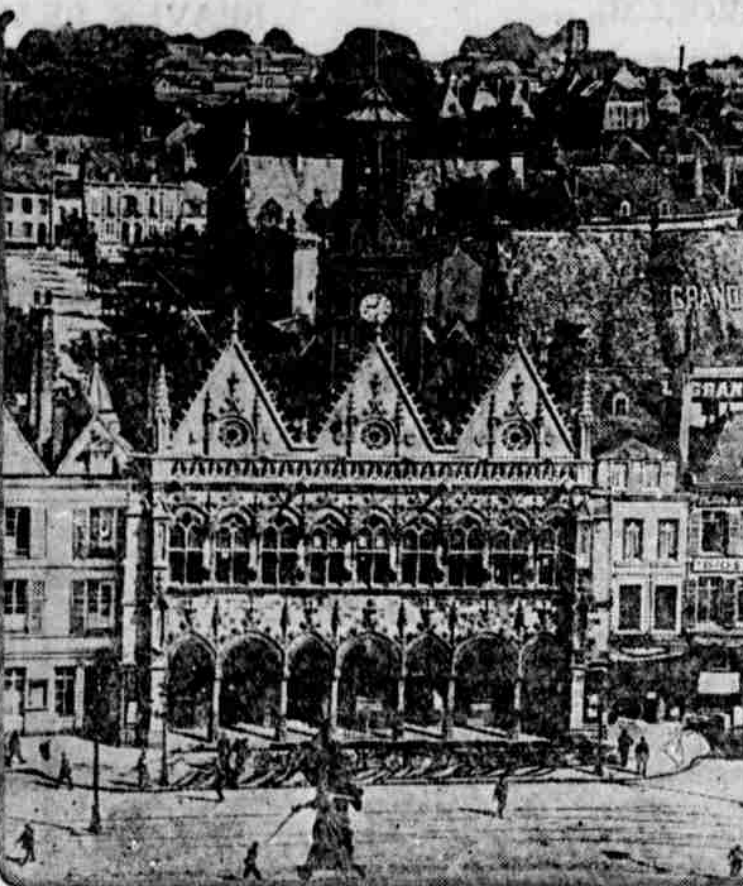
It was Smith's turn again and he cut in smartly.

The next installment describes a sharp clash between Stanton and Smith. The fight ceases to be merely a battle of wits and becomes deadly and desperate and bloody.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Roots Must Have Room.
The yield of cotton is dependent upon the number of flowers we are able to induce the plant to form, and root space is necessary to flowering. The cotton plant's normal rooting may occupy two square yards of earth, which is several times more than given it in practice, and the yield may often be reduced by this fact as the roots must interlap.

St. Quentin



THE HOTEL DE VILLE

AT FOUR o'clock on the afternoon of August 28, 1914, the Germans took possession of the city of St. Quentin on the Somme. Owing to the incredible swiftness of the enemy advance the tiny garrison and the population were taken completely by surprise, and no resistance could be offered. The city being surrounded on all sides, the enemy stormed in at every point. Without a siege, without a battle, St. Quentin was overwhelmed by the countless hordes of the Germans, who were carrying all before them in that great relentless westward movement towards Paris that seemed to promise complete and dazzling victory to their arms.

Through the changes and chances of centuries of war, St. Quentin has seen heroes in all generations lay down their lives in her streets and about her walls, from the dawn of history till present times, says E. Maxtone Graham in *Country Life*. A prosperous manufacturing town with 130,000 inhabitants engaged in modern industries does not seem suggestive of historical associations. The St. Quentin of today has spread over a large acreage, and has grown to be one of the main centers in France for railway communications and for cotton and many other useful, if unpicturesque, industries.

To visualize St. Quentin in old days, imagination must clear away all but a few old streets and buildings, retaining the exquisite Hotel de Ville and the glorious Gothic church begun in the twelfth century, with its double transept and arches soaring to incredible height. St. Quentin lay always in the very path of war, and, like all other cities of the Somme, even in early days could never count on any lasting peace.

The pages of the old French chronicles of the fifteenth century are almost entirely taken up with records of the wars between the crown and the powerful dukes of Burgundy, one unending list of personal feud and foray, the seizing and sacking of small towns, the skirmishing of small forces. In the spring of 1414, Charles VI, the Mad King of France, who was so keen a soldier between his attacks of insanity, was engaged in the congenial task of turning Burgundy out of various towns on the Somme. Having wrested Soissons from the duke, after a siege, he reduced the captured town to the last depths of misery. A few days later the king rode, well pleased, to St. Quentin with his knights and found royal lodging there.

Was Strong Frontier Town.

St. Quentin was for centuries considered the strongest frontier town of Picardy. The wide-spreading marsh of the Somme formed a protection on three sides. The city lay in the direct road of all northern invasions. Who ever held St. Quentin held the key to Paris. Yet in 1557 the Spanish war found the ramparts in ruinous condition and the defenses neglected. The resources of Spain included 60,000 men under Manuel Philibert, duke of Savoy, and the Flemish Count d'Egmont. Against these forces were opposed the finest chivalry of France, hopelessly outnumbered. Gaspard de Coligny, admiral of France, and Anne de Montmorency, constable of France, one of the illustrious veterans of Francois I, both men full of wisdom, courage and greatness of soul, are the outstanding names in the story of the battle and siege of St. Quentin, which was destined to be for France one of those defeats which add luster to her name.

At the outset Coligny forced the Spanish lines and got into St. Quentin with 900 men, before the first attack could be delivered. Once inside, he realized the desperate condition of affairs, the ruined ramparts, the lack of provisions and of munitions. Unless help could be got from outside, the place could not hold out for a week. The constable was at La Fere with the French army. The Spanish host was gathered threateningly on the one side of St. Quentin that was unprotected by the marshes. Some of the inhabitants of St. Quentin told Coligny that

through the shallow marshes a stream flowed, deep enough to carry large boats. Coligny made a rapid plan to get reinforcements, food and munitions into the city by this means from La Fere. The constable thought well of the idea. Five boats were hurriedly constructed, and d'Audot, younger brother of Coligny, was charged with the task of carrying out the scheme, but it failed, and only 450 men of the tiny expeditionary force led by d'Audot got through to the relief of the city.

Defeat of the Constable.

The aim of the constable was to engage the Spanish forces while the operation from La Fere was carried out. Unfortunately, he lost too much time, and had no opportunity to draw up his men in battle array. Savoy and Egmont charged his troops too quickly. In less than half an hour they were thrown into disorder with great loss. Retreat was difficult and ultimate disaster seemed imminent. The constable asked an old officer: "What must we do?" "I knew an hour ago, but I do not know now," was the reply. "And I," exclaimed Comte d'Enghien, "I know where to find not safety, but an honorable death," and flinging himself upon the Spanish lines, found the death he desired. The old constable fought like the hero he was, till at last taken prisoner, with all his leading generals.

After the battle the Spanish, and especially the German officers, speculated freely in the ransoms demanded for the number of distinguished generals and princes taken prisoners. They bought them for small sums from the private soldiers who had first captured and disarmed them, and then resold them among themselves. The arrival on the scene of Philip of Spain himself, from Cambray, alone put an end to the infamous gamble.

The town of St. Quentin held out for 17 days after the loss of the battle. Under the brilliant leadership of Coligny, who must have known the impossibility of driving off the besiegers, the little garrison stubbornly resisted. But with the flags taken from the conquered French army floating before the ramparts, the hearts of the citizens faltered at last. When 11 huge breaches had been made in the walls, through which the Spaniards might surge into the streets, he yielded. The city was given over to the usual horrors of fire and pillage, while the inhabitants fled into the open country. Coligny was taken prisoner.

Doubtless in the modern city of St. Quentin little thought is given to such old-world and fast-fading histories, as her prosperous citizens enjoy their leisure on the large shady boulevards. These walks are situated on the site of the old ramparts, once the scene of so much passionate effort. They were demolished by Napoleon's order in 1810. Could he have thought that the tide of war would never surge round the city's walls again? Sixty years after she had been rendered defenseless, the Germans took possession of her on their way to Paris. In January, 1871, General von Goeben routed the army of General Faidherbe, after a prolonged and glorious resistance. The Germans claim that in the battle their forces numbered 30,000 against 40,000 of the French. They paid dearly in killed and wounded for their victory. But von Goeben took 10,000 prisoners.

When, in the last days of August, 1914, the mighty hordes of the Germans moved forward and forced back the French army for a hundred miles, pouring on towards Paris, they swept over St. Quentin, engulfing her prosperities and robbing France of industries very vital to her needs.

The Very Reason.

He—I wish you wouldn't sing.
She—I thought you liked music?
He—I do.

Matched.

"What did they have in common?"
"Gardening. He had a business plant, and she had widow's weeds."



"Try to Find Out About the Hobo."

and the new officer, who was as yet without a title, had struck out his plan of campaign.

"Amortization," is the word, colonel," was Smith's prompt verdict after he had gone over Martin's summaries. "The best way to get at it now is to wipe the slate clean and begin over again."

The ranchman president was chuckling soberly.
"Once more you'll have to show me, John," he said. "We folks out here in the hills are not up in the Wall street crinkles."

"You don't know the word? It means to scrap the old machinery to make room for the new," Smith ex-